Trade imbalance between India and China

947. DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA:
SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that trade between India and China will reach more than 20 billion dollars during the current financial year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is trade deficit between India and China and also with other countries; and

(d) how this trade gap will be filled and what steps have been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) The trade between India and China has already crossed US $ 20 billion in the year 2007-08. During 2007-08 the trade between India and China was of the volume of US $ 37.9 billion.

(c) The trade deficit between India and China during the year 2007-08 was US $ 16.27 billion. During 2007-08 the trade deficit with South Korea was US $ 3.1 billion and with Japan US $ 2.4 billion.

(d) The trade gap can be filled by increasing our exports to these countries. During the Prime Minister's visit to China in January 2008 the Commerce and Industry Minister raised the issue of growing trade deficit with his Chinese counterpart. In order to bridge the trade deficit from 2007 onwards China is organising South Asian Commodity fair every year. India Trade Promotion Organisation along with Export Promotion Councils is participating in these fairs. The only way to bridge the trade gap with the rest of world, including China is to make exports more competitive. Appreciation of currency, reduction of interest rates and increase in infrastructure spending are some of the steps taken to improve the competitiveness of Indian exports.

Abduction of Indian fishermen by Srilankan Navy

948. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Coast Guard has taken enough steps to protect the Indian fishermen from abduction and harassment by Srilankan navy;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for continued abduction of Indian fishermen particularly from the State of Tamil Nadu despite the presence of Indian Coast Guard in Bay of Bengal; and

(c) the number of Indian fishermen abducted by Srilankan navy during the last one year and the steps taken to secure their release by Government and the number of fishermen released so far?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) Yes, Sir.